



# **The Florida House of Representatives**

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### **Speaker Congratulates Environmental Groups** ***Statement regarding support for Babcock Ranch deal by majority of environmental protection community***

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – With Florida's five major environmental protection groups expressing support for the state purchase of 74,000 acres of the Babcock Ranch, Florida House Speaker Allan Bense issued the following statement:

"I am extremely pleased that the Audubon of Florida, 1000 Friends of Florida, Florida Wildlife Federation, Everglades Foundation and Everglades Trust have all shown the courage to publicly disagree with their traditional ally, the Sierra Club," said Speaker Bense. "By supporting this historic land purchase, these groups have shown that they truly care about preserving Florida's environmental treasures.

"Through hours of public debate and discussion, the Florida Legislature, Governor Bush, Lee and Charlotte counties and everyone involved have worked hard to forge a compromise that provides the maximum benefit to the people of Florida – those living today as well as future generations. It would indeed be a shame to see all that effort go down the drain due to one group's stubbornness.

"I sincerely hope the children of tomorrow will be able to visit and experience 74,000 acres of pristine old Florida, not just sit in traffic as their parents drive by 94,000 acres of sprawling development. Toward that end, I urge the Sierra Club to follow the lead of every other environmental group and support this opportunity to preserve a unique Florida treasure."

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